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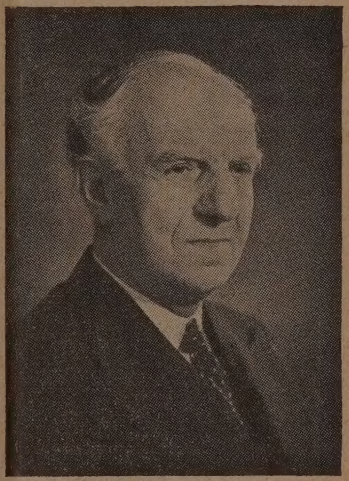
# THE UNITARIAN

A MAGAZINE FOR FREE CHRISTIANS

**THESE ARE UNITARIANS**
*A new series of articles on men and women of political, literary, dramatic, civic or other reputation, who belong to our Unitarian faith.*

## 1. The Rt. Hon. Earl Woolton., P.C., C.H., D.L.



Lord Woolton was born in Manchester and was educated as a Manchester man at the Grammar School and the University, and in later years became a governor of the School and Chancellor of the University of which he is a graduate in arts and science, and a Research Fellow in Economics. In 1908 he was appointed warden of the University Settlement and David Lewis Club in Liverpool, and this marked the beginning of a long association with the life of Liverpool in a variety of public activities. But though he graduated from being a "Manchester Man" to a "Liverpool Gentleman" his love for the city of his birth has always remained warm and deep.

During the First World War Lord Woolton (then Mr. Frederick Marquis) held several posts under the government, and in 1920 he was appointed to the Board of Directors of a large business house with many branches up and down the country, and became chairman in 1935. In the same year the King conferred on him the honour of knighthood. Among his many positions of honour and service may be mentioned his governorship of the Royal College of Art, chairmanship of the Board of Trade Committee on Art and Industry, and membership of the Advisory Council on Treasury Loans for Special Areas.

These many and varied services to the country were recognised in 1939 when he was created a Baron, taking as his title a name which linked him with the city of Liverpool in which he spent so many years, and to which he had rendered so many benefits.

It was, however, during the Second World War in particular that Lord Woolton distinguished himself and gained a high reputation amongst his fellow-countrymen as a great organiser and administrator. At the beginning of the conflict he was appointed Director-General of Equipment and Stores in

the Ministry of Supply, but in 1940 with the isolation of this country, and the consequent growth of the threat to food supplies, he was selected for appointment as Minister of Food, a position which he filled with remarkable success during the following three years. There can never have been a more critical period in British history than those fateful years, and the triumph of the nation over the threat of starvation can be attributed in no small measure to the energy, foresight and genius of Lord Woolton. The whole of our people were indebted to him for our preservation and many of the blessings of this life, even though the blessings came to us in tins. In later years he was Minister of Reconstruction and Lord President of the Council.

Immersed in politics as Chairman of the Conservative Party, he was never at heart a politician, but first and foremost a superb organiser and first-class business administrator.

In his early years he was associated with Upper Brook Street Church, Manchester, during the ministry of the Rev. Charles Peach, and on his settlement in Liverpool he and his family were closely associated with Ullet Road Church during the ministry of the Rev. Lawrence Redfern, and he was one of a group of Unitarian laity who rendered distinguished service to the city of which he is an Honorary Freeman.

## THE RIGHT SPIRIT

When demolitions next door to George's Chapel (Unitarian) in Exeter began last August, the caretaker, Mr. Bertie Hill, had just given the building its intensive annual cleaning. Imagine the dust that seeped under doors and between window sashes to fall silently but not unnoticed upon the chapel floors and furniture. But, thanks to Mr. Hill, when the chapel was opened on September 1st, not a speck of dust remained.

A shopkeeper in a Manchester suburb heard from customers much talk from time to time about the poor spirit shown by transport drivers or conductors lacking in consideration for passengers. As it was her custom to travel by bus to Manchester once a week, she was familiar with all the stopping places. Once, her bus stopped well away from the usual place, and the shopkeeper wondered why. How delighted she was when she saw the driver leave his cab—not to make some adjustment to the engine, as she was expecting, but to conduct a blind woman across the road. The time lost on this good turn was certainly not resented by the passengers.

## AMERICAN APHORISMS

**"A Book of Contemplation,"** by Dagobert D. Runes ($3.00, Philosophical Library, New York) is a collection of comments arranged under alphabetical word-headings. It is a book for browsing in, and the thoughts are described as the outcome of "a humble but dogged search for what is true in nature and what is good in man." Here are a few samples.

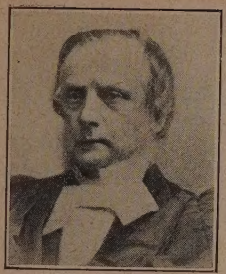
ABOLITIONISM: The white man took willingly the black man as burden, but hesitates to take him as friend.

CATHEDRAL: The most imposing cathedrals are never too far from slums.

FASCISM: The path of the dictator is paved with democratic pronouncements.

GOLDEN RULE: Do to others as you say you do.

RESURRECTION: The breath-taking concept of man's religion, an immortal soul in eternity!—in small eyes, a selfish vision of personal reward in a comfortable hereafter arranged by a police-type judge for the goody-goodies.



## A NOTABLE ANNIVERSARY

**John Hamilton Thom**
**1808—1894**

One hundred and fifty years ago, on January 10th, John Hamilton Thom was born at Newry in County Down. He came of Scottish descent, and while he was educated at Belfast at the Academical Institution, it was in England that he was to make his mark as a distinguished preacher.

Thom was gifted with a mind of great spiritual perception, and a tongue of great persuasiveness, and at the early age of 21 he left Ireland to become minister of the Ancient Chapel of Toxteth in Liverpool. From there he moved after only two years to the ministry of Renshaw Street Chapel, the forerunner of the present Ullet Road congregation. At Renshaw Street he served for the rest of his active ministry, which lasted for thirty-five years, except for a break from 1854 to 1857, when he felt that he needed a rest from pastoral office for fear of becoming more an automaton in his duties than a truly inspired messenger of God.

By the middle of the 19th century, Liverpool had become the scene of some powerful ministries. James Martineau was at Paradise Street Chapel, a building to be succeeded by Hope Street Church, and Martineau and Thom became very close friends, and took part in 1839 in a public controversy with several Church of England ministers on the Doctrine of the Trinity, in a series of public addresses which are in print.

At the beginning of his ministry Thom, though a liberal-minded preacher, was less of a Unitarian than an Arian, believing that Jesus Christ had lived in heaven before his birth in Palestine, and that he was to some extent a mediator between God and men. His views developed on more modern Unitarian lines, but he was never, like Martineau, much concerned with critical attitudes on sources in the Gospels. For him the Fourth Gospel was a source for the actual words of Jesus as valuable as the first three, and it was in the Fourth Gospel that he found the greatest inspiration for his sermons.

Not that John Hamilton Thom was a spiritual influence without practical interests. Liverpool was second to no English city in which Unitarians felt the concern to improve social conditions, just as it was a city and seaport in which they had the most ample field for their reforms and charities. When, in 1834, Jonathan Phillips and Dr. Joseph Tuckerman came from America to expound the idea of a "Ministry to the Poor," Thom was one of the first to be impressed, and his Christmas Day sermon in 1835 urged vigorous action among Unitarians which was taken up by Martineau and others. So Liverpool has not only its Domestic Mission in Mill Street, but its North End Mission also, now Hamilton Road Church. Thom was also active in editorial work, and took an active interest in Manchester College. He was one of our Unitarian prophets.

## TIME

**By A. B. Downing**

There are few of us who do not greet every New Year with some special private thoughts and emotions. There is always something distinctly solemn and mystifying about that moment of midnight when the Old Year passes into the New.

In a mysterious sense, which even the scientists find it hard to grasp satisfactorily, we are all products of Time. Time is one of the fundamental "realities" of the Cosmos, without which human life is unthinkable. Yet it is practically beyond our everyday capacities of definition. The most we can say is that time is duration and sequence, and we measure it in practice by calculating the rotation of the earth round the sun—a measurement which has very little relevance to the meaning of Time considered in relation to the Cosmos as a whole. Some sense of Time always enters into our picture of life and indeed into our view of God.

Thus for the religious person, indeed for any thoughtful person, the passage from the Old to the New Year inevitably reminds us of some very deep questions. To the mystery of Life is added the mystery of Time. The one mystery has in truth no meaning without the other. Time needs Life and Life needs Time. God, in one sense, is Time seen as a whole: past, present and future all somehow rolled into one in a way suggested for us by that obscure but important word, Eternity. And God is also Life, something living as Time is something living. Thus we see that each New Year not only has human implications. It has divine implications too. And the religious person greets the New Year well when he welcomes it with the recognition that our religion is "the vision of something which stands beyond, behind and within the passing flux of immediate things; something which is real and yet waiting to be realised; somthing which is a remote possibility and yet the greatest of present facts; something that gives meaning to all that passes and yet eludes apprehension."

## THESE DENOMINATIONS

**An American Handbook**

How often do ministers hear the question asked "What is the difference between Congregational and Presbyterian churches?" Or "What do Roman Catholics believe about so-and-so?" Or "Where can I find a book about the different kinds of churches?"

Now there has come from America a book with nearly all the answers —given by members of the denominations concerned. **"The Religions of America"** (Heinemann, 21s.) edited by Leo Rosten, is an excellent production. Though the American counterparts of our denominations in this country are not always organised exactly as ours are, and though they may have differences of emphasis in doctrine, this book is of great value to British enquirers as well as Americans.

Not only does it give accounts of the chief churches, including Christian Science, Jehovah's Witnesses, Jews, Seventh-Day Adventists and Unitarians, it adds a characteristic chapter by Bertrand Russell "What is an Agnostic," and a very excellent article by a scientist, Warren Weaver, "Can a scientist believe in God?" This chapter is an admirably expressed affirmative answer.

Each chapter is in the form of answers to specific questions, e.g., "Do Unitarians believe in prayer?" "How is the Unitarian Church organised?" and this certainly makes for clarity, though often enough the answers have to be both "Yes" and "No," with explanations. Youth groups should find this book useful for U.Y.P.L. "exploration" discussions.

*The School Secretary, Miss Mansfield, will now give her statistics. These are not as vital as we could have wished.*

## CHILDREN'S CORNER

### Old Tom's Cottage

Every one knew him as "Old Tom." He lived in a cottage on the edge of Thingummy Woods and was some kind of wood-keeper. He spent a lot of time in the woods, cutting, sweeping, clearing, helping the animals and the Wood-Folk when they were hurt or in danger. He and the Wood-Folk were great friends.

So it caused much distress when, one cold January morning, Zippa darted down the path, hurtled through the grass and finally pulled up breathless in the midst of an anxious throng. After a moment he told them that Old Tom's cottage was nowhere to be seen! Consternation followed, but Nippa and Pippa took control and led several able Folk to the outskirts of the wood.

Neither could they see the cottage! Some became fearful until Nippa suddenly said, "Why, there it is!"

"Where?"

"There!" he insisted, pointing; and sure enough, there it was, almost buried in snow. The strong winds had driven huge drifts against it.

"Old Tom will be suffocating," cried one.

"No, no," said Pippa, "the chimney is smoking."

Then someone said, "Let's dig it away quickly and find the front door." So they began to dig, scooping and clearing the snow away until, eventually, the windows were revealed—and the door. They rat-tatted, heard shuffling steps, watched the door open—and there was Old Tom! He blinked, took his pipe from his mouth and smiled.

"Well, well! Good morning! This *is* nice of you."

"But Tom," burst out Dippa, "we thought you were hurt; the snow was all over your cottage."

Old Tom looked puzzled, and then saw the snow. "Why, bless my soul," he said, "I didn't know. I got up in the dark, but my clock had stopped, so I didn't know the time. I thought I was just up too early!"

Everybody heaved a sigh, and Tom said, "Come in, all of you, and join me at breakfast—there's enough for you all."

**TRANSACTIONS OF THE UNITARIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

Vol. XI, Part 3. 1957

Editor: C. Gordon Bolam

Contents:

**Memories of the Origin and Building of Ullet Road Church, Liverpool** (1896-1899) Ronald P. Jones

**The Influence of the Theistic Church Prayer Book**, A. Elliott Peaston

**William Shaen (1820-1887)** H. John McLachlan

**Record Section**, Review, Our Contemporaries, List of Officers, Report, Accounts

Issued only to members of the Society. Membership is 7s. 6d. per annum. Transactions free. Apply to Rev. F. Kenworthy, Unitarian College, Manchester, 14.

# NEWS AND VIEWS

## GENERAL ASSEMBLY

It was reported at the autumn Council that the new Essex Hall building was six weeks behind schedule, but that the basement, ground floor and first floor could be reached. The hall was expected to be in use by the late summer of 1958 and the official opening would be on a suitable date in the autumn.

## OVERSEAS

AUSTRALIA. The ADELAIDE Men's League, which used to meet on a Saturday night has been ceasing to draw members from their firesides, so the idea of a community night in the school hall, partly serious and partly social, has been canvassed. At SYDNEY the Spring Fair raised £70, a good increase on last year's result. The Sunday School now meets at 5 p.m. on Sundays, and adults who accompany children hold a Discussion while the children are in school, and then all have tea together before the service at 7.15 p.m. The congregation is increasing through advertising, and has a budget for advertising of £80, which it is trying to increase to £200.

MELBOURNE. CATHEDRAL PLACE marked the 10th anniversary of the ministry of the Rev. Victor James with special services and record congregations. Thanks and good wishes were expressed after tea in the hall, and a bouquet presented to Mrs. James. The congregation has issued a Unitarian badge modelled on that of the First Church, Prague —a blue letter U on a gilt sunflower, rooted firmly in the nourishing earth and looking up to the light. Two recently published pamphlets by Mr. James, "Who are these Unitarians?" and "To-morrow we die?" have had a good reception. Support for the Save-the-Children Fund and for welfare work among Australian aborigines is given by the church and listeners to the radio "Unitarian Half-Hour." The Sale of Work realised £118 and £480 came through an appeal for direct giving last year.

SOUTH AFRICA. CAPE TOWN calendar challenges its members to bring in 100 new members and invites members to pay for small advertisements in local papers with a brief slogan, e.g., "Unitarian Fellowship—Our teaching is common-sense consecrated. Postbox 419, Cape Town." Other suggestions for slogans are: "God has no favourites." "Nothing is true in religion if false in science or history."

VANCOUVER. The church is making good progress under the Rev. A. P. Hewett, M.A., S.T.M. It has a Bible Study Group, a Discussion Group, a Church School with a waiting list, and a Women's Alliance which is very active and recently arranged a Festival Dinner and entertainment. The Unitarian Service Committee is appealing for volunteers to knit pullovers, and supply wool. They are for refugee use.

## HOME CHURCHES

BRISTOL has started a Scout troop, and is having the chapel floodlit, the expense being paid for two years by a member.

DONCASTER. The November Sale brought in £272. It was opened by Mr. W. Lomax, instead of by Mrs. Procter, of Newchurch, who was ill. After a forthright sermon on the world-wide attack on human rights, the congregation took a retiring collection for the South African Treason Trial Defence Fund, realising £4 5s. 0d.

DUDLEY. At a recent service the sermon was "sung" by the congregation, in four hymns, linked with short reading and explanations.

DUKINFIELD. The final figure from the Centenary Bazaar is expected to reach £1,700. The Women's League arranged a tea and social for all chapel members and friends in aid of the Essex Hall rebuilding appeal.

HINCKLEY. The young people organised a bonfire social in Novem-

per in aid of the boiler fund. Guests were invited to bring their own potatoes to roast in the fire. The Y.P.L. took charge of evening service on November 10th.

LONDON. HACKNEY Sunday School runs periodical competitions for its members. Cooking and match-box collections were the subjects of recent ones. RICHMOND realised £60 at the autumn Sale.

MANCHESTER. ALTRINCHAM'S Christmas Fair realised over £260. There was an attractive decorative scheme on "The Geophysical Year" with back-cloth designs in colour of earth, moon and sputniks, and the radar telescope at Joddrel Bank. The Y.P.L. organised a Bonfire party on November 5th in aid of their stall, and sold baked potatoes (done in the school oven, not on the bonfire), treacle toffee and parkin which they had made. CHORLTON has started a Men's Forum and a Concert Party, and the Y.P.L. have furnished a lounge for their own use. They were hosts for the regional (postponed) rally on November 30th, at which members of the various Y.P.L. branches were sent to visit one of a number of old people's homes, and then returned for tea and a discussion of ways of serving the needs of old people, before the evening social began. CROSS STREET CHAPEL again held four lunch hour Advent Services on Wednesdays before Christmas, and BROOKFIELD CHURCH, Gorton, held a similar series on Wednesday evenings. Six members of URMSTON church have removed the concrete hut from the ruins of Cross Street Chapel, since the work of demolition and re-building has begun, and intend to re-erect it behind the Urmston buildings for use as a Sunday School extension. But for providing their own labour, the cost would have been prohibitive. The annual Sale of Work produced £70 profit.

STOCKPORT congregation has adopted the "Simplex" offertory scheme, and made a special effort with the annual Sale of Work in view of the need to provide a new heating boiler.

TODMORDEN. A series of musical half-hours at 7.15 after Sunday evening service has been started, with organ music, a solo, and a retiring collection. Preparations are in hand for a Dutch Fair next April. The Women's League Week-end included an enjoyable tea and social, and a Sunday evening service with music by the League Choir, and conducted by the Rev. Rosamund Barker, B.D.

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This small collection of sixty hymns is "A small treasury of hymns truly expressive of the Unitarian faith in its various aspects." Biographical notes appear in alphabetical order at end of the book.
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**The Story and Significance of the Unitarian Movement**
by W. G. Tarrant, B.A.
Reprinted with additional notes
1/6 by post 1/9
The Lindsey Press, 15, Gordon Square, London, W.C.1.

## A LITTLE SERMON

**From a Church Calendar**

According to some people nothing is right. The minister does not preach as he should, the caretaker does not clean properly, the committee do not see to this or that, members are unfriendly, and so on, *ad infinitum*. It is a wonder we have any church at all.

But do you, if you are one of these critics, do all you should? Are you what you would call a first-class member yourself? Are you regular in attendance at Divine Worship? Do you support any of the organisations of the church? Have you ever brought in a new member? Do you give a welcome to all around you? Are you patient with people whose ways are not your ways?

All these are very easy things to do, and they are your job Strangely enough, those who do them seldom criticise. Psychologists say we only criticise to cover our own faults, but that is going too deep for a sermonette. The greatest sermon ever preached advised us not to judge lest we be judged. That sermon is said to contain the secret of happiness.

## UNITARIANS IN THE NEWS

Mr. F. J. C. Poole, of Dudley, has retired after 46 years as organist.

The Rev. Dr. E. Meyer Klugel, of Cork, is going to Exeter with charge of Crediton.

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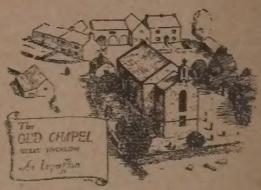
Northern Sunday School Federation
**UNITARIAN HOLIDAY HOMES**

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